

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claims 2, 9 and 38 are requested to be canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Additionally, claims 59-64 were previously withdrawn from consideration and are now requested to be canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Of course, Applicant reserves the right to pursue those claims by way of a divisional application.

Claims 1, 3-5, 7-8, 10-11, 14-20, 22-26, 29-32, 34, 36-37, 39-41, 43-54 and 57-58 are currently being amended.

This amendment adds, changes and/or deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1, 3-8, 10-37 and 39-58 are now pending in this application.

Summary of claim status:

The Examiner has indicated claims 9, 19, 38-42 and 48 would be allowable if re-written in independent format.

The Examiner has objected to claims 22, 23, 25, 29, 51-53 and 57 for reciting features without proper antecedent basis.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-8, 10-18, 20-37, 43-47 and 49-58 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0044659 to Ohta in view of various other references.

Discussion:

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 9, 19, 38-42 and 48. In order to expedite prosecution of the present application, Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the features that were originally recited in claim 2 and allowable claim 9. Accordingly, Applicant has canceled claims 2 and 9.

Applicant has further re-written claims 19 and 48 in independent form. Amended claims 19 and 48 now include the features that were originally recited in claims 1 and 31, respectively.

Applicant has also amended claim 31 to include the features that were originally recited in allowable claim 38. Accordingly, Applicant has canceled claim 38.

In view of the above-noted amendments, independent claims 1, 19, 31 and 48 are patentable.

Applicant has further made minor amendments to the pending claims in order to provide proper antecedent basis for the various features, correct the dependency of various dependent claims, and to clarify some of the recited features. Applicant does not believe these amendments affect the scope of the pending claims.

Claims 3-8, 10-18, 20-30, 32-37, 39-47 and 49-58 each depend from one of allowable claims 1 or 31 and are, therefore, patentable for at least that reason, as well as for additional patentable features when those claims are considered as a whole.

Conclusion:

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by the credit card payment instructions in EFS-Web being incorrect or absent, resulting in a rejected or incorrect credit card transaction, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date December 4, 2009

By /Sanjeev K. Dhand/

FOLEY & LARDNER LLP
Customer Number: 30542
Telephone: (858) 847-6860
Facsimile: (858) 792-6773

Sanjeev K. Dhand
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 51,182